

The Ride

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Going to school was a thrilling event, especially since it involved riding in a shiny black and red pony cart behind the most handsome pony you ever saw. I discovered after a few rides that Jerry was not only handsome, but high-spirited and of a very unstable disposition. He resented being held in check when galloping down the hill or swerving around the corners.

There were a half dozen of us who traveled to school in this manner. There were the older ones, who were all of twelve or thirteen, and then three of us who were shy little first-graders.

The small red brick school, which we attended, was on the other side of a rather steep hill. It was an exciting experience each morning and evening as we went tearing down the hill and up on the other side. Each of us held tightly to whatever we could, and then we would scream at the top of our voices. It was fun, but it gave me a queer feeling in the pit of my stomach, and the screams which I sent forth were often filled with alarm.

As the days went by, Jerry became more temperamental. Each day Ted had more trouble holding him down. I became frightened and dreaded the trips to and from school each day, but would never

have admitted my fear. The others would have dubbed me a "chicken."

One morning, about three or four weeks after school had started, Ted could hardly get Jerry stopped long enough for me to climb in the cart. We seemed to be actually flying that morning. However, it wasn't until we had gone bouncing down the hill and up on the other side that we realized that Ted had lost control of Jerry. He was running away! Jerry kept going faster. When, if ever, would he stop? Would he halt at the usual place or would he go dashing by the school, and what would happen to us? These questions raced frantically through my mind.

Suddenly there was the school! Jerry slowed down to about sixty miles an hour and turned in the school yard. The cart overturned, and all of us came spilling out like oranges from a peddler's cart. When we had recovered from the shock and the terror of the ride, we discovered that no one was seriously injured.

Down deep in my heart, I was happy the accident had occurred. Not only did I get added attention and publicity because of my bruised leg, but the terrifying rides each morning and evening were ended by unanimous vote of our parents.